GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4676
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2008
SPECIAL FUNDS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that some rural areas have remained neglected for several years and are still out of sight;

(b) if so, whether the Government is considering to set-up a special fund for promoting development activities in neglected rural areas; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL)

(a) to (c): So far as the pace of development is concerned, the regional disparities still persist due to varied geographical, natural resources and socio-economic conditions in the country and this fact has been recognized in various Plan Documents also. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) has been extended to all the districts. Under NREGA, 100 days guaranteed job is provided to a rural household who are willing to do unskilled job. Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) has been revamped to give emphasis on placement based training and skill development. For development of infrastructure, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is being implemented all over the country to provide rural connectivity. Similarly, Drinking Water Supply in rural areas is being implemented in all the villages. Social Security Scheme of Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) is also implemented in all the villages to provide Old Age Pnesion of Rs.200/- from the Centre and supplementary by the States to all Below Poverty Line (BPL) Families having age of 65 years and above.

In order to develop all rural areas, a Special Business Plan under the name of `Bharat Nirman` has been launched by the Government. Bharat Nirman aims at developing rural infrastructure having six components namely, irrigation, rural roads, rural housing, rural drinking water supply, rural telephone connectivity and rural electricity. Bharat Nirman is being implemented as a time bound Plan for the period 2005-09 with the total estimated investment of Rs.1,74,000 crore. The Government have also taken other initiatives such as National Rural Health Mission and Sarvshiksha Abhiyan to improve the living conditions of the rural masses.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is also operating the Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) Programme in 250 backward districts of the country identified by the Planning Commission. The BRGF is designed to redress the regional imbalances in development. The programme has two components, namely, District Components covering 250 districts and special Plans for Bihar and the KBK Districts of Orissa. The Districts Component of the BRGF will provide financial resources for supplementing and converging existing developmental inflows into the identified districts to bridge critical gaps with the involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The special Plan for Bihar has been formulated to bring about improvement in sectors like power, road, connectivity, irrigation, forestry and watershed development. The Special Plan for the KBK districts aims at addressing the development gaps in this region. The BRGF will continue during the Eleventh Five Year Plan period. A provision of Rs.5800 crore has been made for BRGF annually for 2007-08 and 2008-09.